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THE MAYFAIR BIOGRAPHIES

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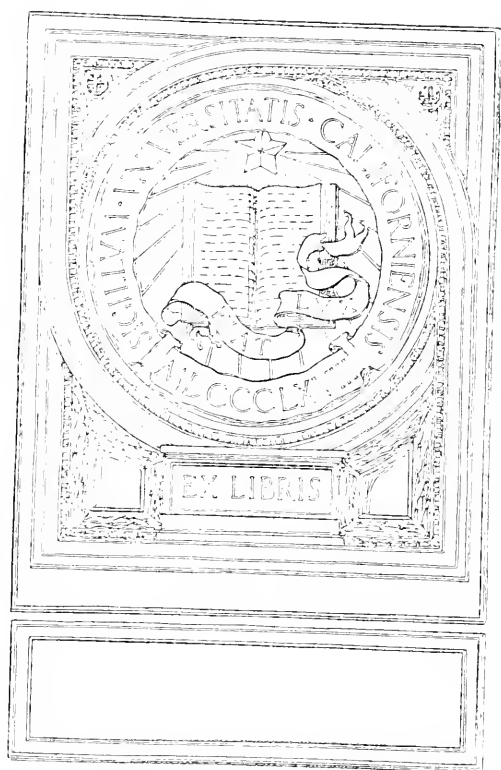


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HAYDN

BY
SIR FREDERIC COWEN

MURDOCH, MURDOCH & CO.,
23, PRINCES STREET, OXFORD CIRCUS,
LONDON, W.1.



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SIR FREDERIC COWEN

MURDOCH,
LONDON.
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THE MAYFAIR BIOGRAPHIES.

Edited by EMILE LESAGE.

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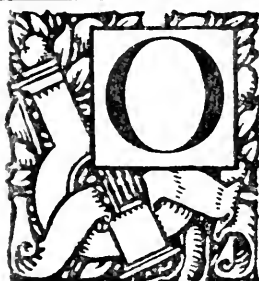
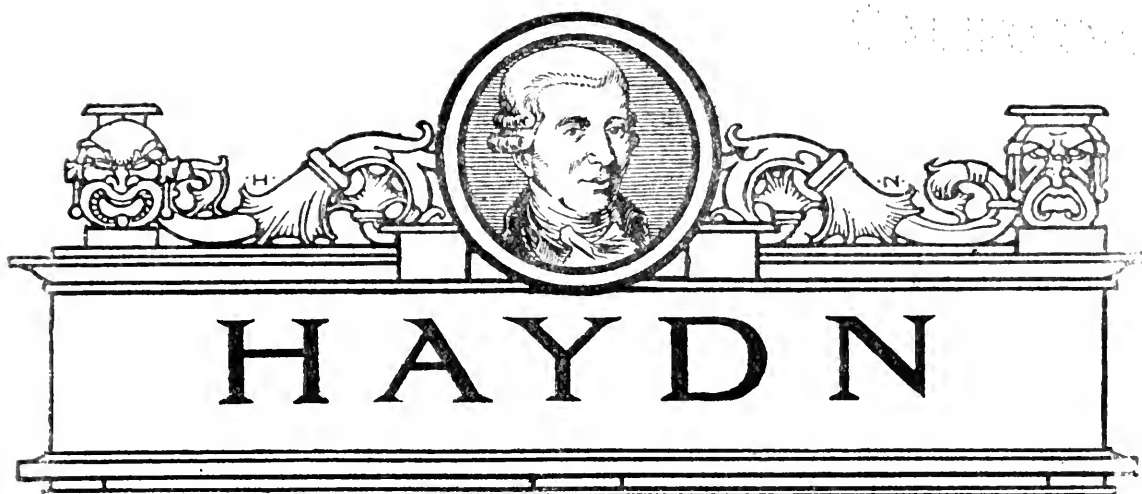
After the picture by C. Jäger. Photo: Bruckmann, Munich.



FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN

Born at Rohrau, Austria, March 31st, 1732.

Died at Vienna, May 31st, 1809.

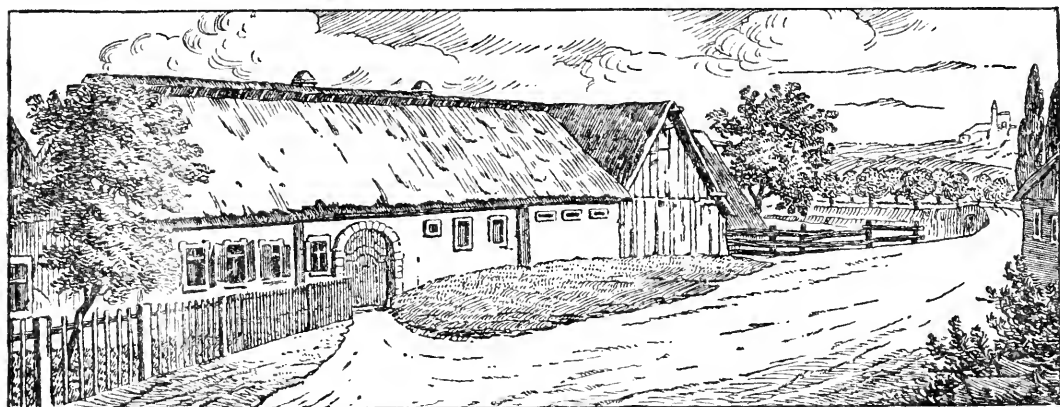


F all the arts Music is the one which appeals most to the emotions. It is a language in itself, and though perhaps in its highest forms it is but poorly understood except by the educated, yet there is hardly any one among the masses of the uninitiated who is not moved to a greater or lesser extent by its strains.

It can bring tears to the eyes, or happiness to the heart; it can thrill with its grandeur, charm with its melodiousness, or excite with its passion; it can inspire all the sentiments of faith, religion, hope, and love which are never quite dormant in our hearts; in short, it can rouse within us all those varied emotions of which human nature is capable, and make us the better and nobler for the arousing. The great composers, through the medium of their genius, have all impressed us in one or another of these ways. Handel has taken us to the realms of eternal glory; Beethoven to the land of the Titans; Mendelssohn to fairy-land; Schubert to the skies where the birds sing their unforced and happy songs; Wagner to the dwelling-place of heroes and romance: but among all these, it has been reserved almost exclusively to Haydn to transport us, in his own delicious manner, to the land where cheerfulness and simple delight hold their innocent and unceasing revels.

Papa Haydn! That is what he has often been called. But perhaps a still more appropriate name for him would be Grandpapa Haydn. To think of him is like recalling the time in our childhood when we sat on some fond grandparent's knee, and listened and laughed with him,

the while he invented happy little stories to amuse us : or, if the time is too remote for personal recollection, to take our delight in the recounting by others of this ancestor's jovial and affectionate ways, his old-fashioned courtesy, his inexhaustible fund of good spirits, which, they tell us, endeared him to all who knew him. To listen to Haydn's music is to bring before us pictures of laces and ruffles, of powder and silk stockings, of stately minuets and merry country dances ; in fact, of all those things which belong to a time when to exist did not mean one constant rush and whirl, and when people were content with a simple life, simple pleasures, and simple music. Were they any the less happy and light-hearted on this account ?



HAYDN'S BIRTHPLACE AT ROHRAU, A VILLAGE OF LOWER AUSTRIA.

Haydn's career was not what could be called very eventful or romantic. It is true that he rose from the humblest of origins to become the friend and associate of kings and princes ; but after his early struggles there was little of striking interest in his life beyond that contained in the history of his works and successes, and the visits he paid to London when at the zenith of his fame.

Franz Joseph Haydn was born on March 31, 1732, at Rohrau, in Austria, on the confines of Hungary. His ancestors lived at Hainburg, near the Danube, and were of the peasant class, honest and industrious, earning their livelihood in most cases as wheelwrights, which trade was also followed by Haydn's father. Settling down in Rohrau, the latter married, and had twelve children, of whom the subject of this article was the second. The family were all fond of music ; the elder Haydn sang and played the

harp, and another of his sons, Johann Michael, also gained renown as a composer, though lacking the genius of his illustrious brother. The first sign the little Joseph gave of his extraordinary aptitude for music was by singing his parents' favourite songs, and imitating, in absolutely correct fashion, the violin-playing of his schoolmaster, which he did with two pieces of wood as his improvised instrument. He was going through his juvenile performances one day when a relation of the family, Mathias Frankh, a school-teacher in Hainburg, happened to come in; and noticing the child's talent, proposed to take him back with him and superintend his studies. This was acceded to, after considerable reluctance on his mother's part, and little Haydn was taken to Hainburg, where, under Frankh's rather too strict supervision, he was made to work hard for the next two years of his childhood, learning to sing and to play the violin and harpsichord.

When he was eight, relief came to him from this severe treatment of his master in the person of one George Reutter, Kapellmeister at St. Stephen's, Vienna, who, hearing him sing, was struck with the sweetness of his voice, and at once gave the boy a place as chorister in his church.

For the next nineteen years young Haydn remained almost entirely in Vienna. During the time that he was at the Cantorei of St. Stephen's as chorister under Reutter, he continued to have lessons in singing and on the two instruments he had begun to learn at Hainburg, and was also taught reading, writing, arithmetic, religion, and a little Latin; but in the theory of music he was left to shift for himself. This, however, did not discourage the boy; the desire to compose was too strong in him to be defeated by such a trifling obstacle as want of tuition; so it was not long before he began to busy himself by covering all the music-paper he could lay his hands on with the early efforts of his genius, determined in his young mind to make his way in that branch of art for which he instinctively felt Nature had destined him. In this manner, between his studies, his attempts at composition, and his duties at the church, five years were spent. But a period of trouble and hardship was now at hand. His voice began to break, and the Empress having made complaints about this, his brother Michael, who had come to Vienna later as a fellow-chorister, was chosen on the first available occasion to

take his place in the singing of the solos. This was a sad blow to little Joseph ; he knew that Reutter had only kept him for the sake of his voice, and would take the earliest possible opportunity of getting rid of him, now that he was no longer of any use as a singer. This opportunity the boy himself, by his love of mischief, soon provided ; for one day in school, being possessed of a new pair of scissors, he could not resist the temptation of applying them to the hair of one of his schoolfellows, thereby not only cutting short the latter's pigtail but his own term of employment

as well. He had to suffer the indignity of a caning, and was then summarily dismissed from the school.

He was now, at the early age of thirteen, thrown entirely upon his own resources ; but he did not despair. Fortunately, after first obtaining shelter with a chorister of another church, he managed to get some pupils, and this, together with the loan of a few pounds from some good-hearted friend, enabled him to take a lodging in a small attic, where he lived for some time, often with scarcely enough to eat, but working on doggedly and steadily, and improving himself in the art of composing by the study of the works of Emmanuel Bach, on which, it may be said,



SILHOUETTE OF HAYDN.

his own early compositions were modelled. This spirit of determination and undauntedness is exemplified in an incident which is supposed to have occurred about this time. After his dismissal from St. Stephen's, hardly knowing at the moment which way to turn for a living, he heard of a new church which was to be consecrated in the village of Zell near by, and trudged off in the hope of obtaining employment there as a chorister. This was refused him ; but, nothing abashed, he returned on the day the church was opened, and managed (how, we do not know) to secure a place in the choir next to the boy who was to sing the solo. He begged of his young neighbour to be allowed to sing this, but the boy naturally objected. However, he waited patiently until the moment when the anthem was to commence, when, snatching away the score from the hands of the alarmed chorister, he sang the solo

himself, in such a clear, ringing voice as to surprise every one. The church authorities were so delighted that they not only forgot to reprove him for his rude behaviour, but made him a present of a good sum of money. The authenticity of this anecdote is somewhat doubtful, in face of the fact that his loss of voice was the primary cause of his dismissal from St. Stephen's. Still, whether the story is true or not, there can be no doubt that he possessed, at this youthful stage of his career, an unflinching determination and intention to succeed in spite of all difficulties, which stood him in good stead, and without which he would never have risen to his subsequent fame and greatness.

After seven years of hard work and privation, giving lessons at about two florins a month, and pursuing his unaided studies in composition, young Haydn obtained his first public hearing as a composer with the performance of a comic opera (or, more strictly speaking, a farce with incidental songs and pieces), the libretto by the actor Felix Kurz, which was given at the Vienna Stadttheater in 1752. The music of this work has not been preserved, but it evidently achieved some success, as it was played frequently both in Vienna and other towns of Austria and Germany, and it brought him in a sum of money which, if not very large, was at all events considerable in comparison with his very scanty earnings up to that time.

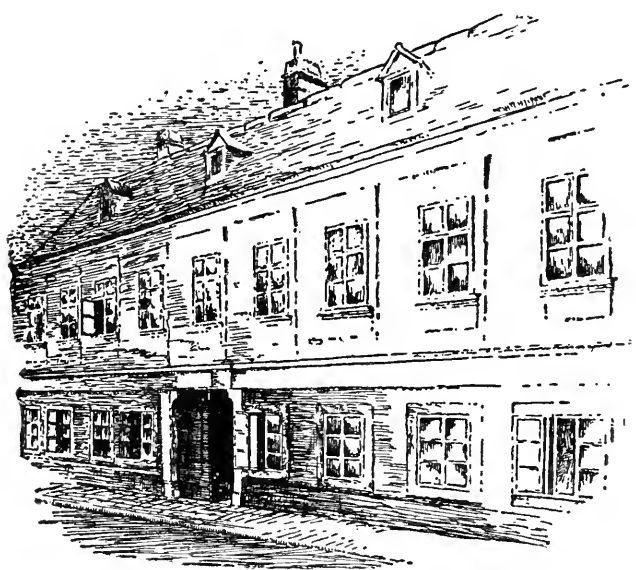
We next see Haydn as a sort of domestic servant to Porpora, the great singing-master of the day. The latter, being in want of an accompanist, offered to take him to Mannersdorf in that capacity, and also to give him instruction in composition; and Haydn, anxious as ever to learn all he could, did not think it beneath his dignity to black Porpora's boots and perform other menial services in return for the knowledge imparted to him. They resided in Mannersdorf for some months, the young composer adding much to the experience he gained from his master's tuition by procuring for himself all the best theoretical works then in existence, mastering their contents, and thus perfecting himself, gradually but surely, in those essentials of his art—theory and form—which he had hitherto had so little opportunity of studying, but which were to make themselves so apparent in his future compositions.

And now the tide in his affairs began to turn, and a fortunate

circumstance was the means not only of bettering his pecuniary condition, but of placing him eventually in the midst of those artistic surroundings where his genius was able to develop itself, and to lay the foundation for the world-wide recognition it afterwards attained. This circumstance was the acquaintance he chanced to make of Karl von Frnberg. Frnberg was a rich amateur, devoted to music, and he invited Haydn to stay with him at his place in the country, where the young composer heard a great deal of chamber music, and was encouraged to write his first quartets. On their return to Vienna his new friend was also

instrumental in obtaining for him a larger number of pupils and on better terms than before, in getting him engagements to play and sing in various churches, and altogether making things more comfortable for him.

This was the first stepping-stone. The next was his appointment, in 1759, as director of Count Morzin's private orchestra at the latter's country seat at



HAYDN'S HOUSE IN VIENNA.

Lukavec, near Pilsen, which position he again owed to Frnberg's influence. His salary was not large (about £20 per annum), but he was boarded and lodged, and, what is more important, he had the control of a small but excellent body of musicians, and was thus enabled to gain his first real insight into orchestral writing, the result of which was the composition of a symphony in D, his initial effort in this form of music. He now evidently thought he was well off enough to justify his exchanging his bachelor life for the married state, and therefore (unknown to the Count, who objected to employ married men) took unto himself a wife—and regretted it ever afterwards. However, he did not see very much of the lady—a fortunate thing for his art, as otherwise a

great deal of the mirth and gaiety which characterise his music might have been lost to the world. His position at Lukavee was not of long duration, as the Count was not able to continue the expense entailed by the keeping up of an orchestra; but Haydn soon found another appointment, and this time it was destined to be the most important one of his whole life. Prince Anton Esterhazy, who had heard and admired the composer's music, when on a visit to Count Morzin, engaged him as conductor of his private concerts, and in 1761, at the age of twenty-nine, Haydn entered upon his duties, and remained in the service of this noble family until his very last years.

Thus the chain of events brought about in the first instance by his friend Fürnberg's influence, opened up for him at last a career which, if perhaps not entirely to the taste of a man of more independent ideas, was at least one that was free from everyday cares, and in which he could exercise his gifts to their fullest extent.

The seat of the Esterhazy family was at this time at Eisenstadt in Hungary, but on the death of Prince Anton the following year, and the succession of his brother Nicolaus as reigning prince, a new palace was built at Sütör, on the Neusiedler-See. Nicolaus was a great lover of the arts, especially music; not only this, but he lived in almost regal style, and delighted in doing everything on the grandest and most magnificent scale possible; and being exceedingly rich, he could gratify his tastes to their utmost limits. Accordingly, the new palace, which was called Esterház, with its art collections, its deer-park, gardens, grottoes, summer-houses, etc., was a marvel of everything that wealth and luxury could suggest, and was unequalled in its splendour by any other place except Versailles. There were two theatres in the grounds, one for opera and drama, and the other for marionettes; and also a café where all those engaged in the performances could meet and indulge in pleasant intercourse during their leisure hours. The orchestra was of course an important factor in the Prince's musical *entourage*, and as well as taking part in the operatic representations, its members gave concerts of chamber music and symphonies at stated intervals during the week. At first Haydn was only second Kapellmeister, but his senior, Werner, dying not long afterwards, the entire superintendence and direction of

the music, including church services, operas, and concerts, came into his hands. His life, if perhaps rather humdrum, could not have been on the whole an unpleasant one. It is true that he had to work pretty hard, what with daily rehearsals and performances, and the composition of music of all sorts ; that he had to wear a uniform when on duty (a somewhat undignified thing for a great musician), and was constantly at the beck and call of his noble patron ; also, that he was practically shut up in the heart of the country, miles away from the centres of musical life and thought, and that the amount he was paid was scarcely adequate to the services he rendered ; but, on the other hand, the musical



FROM A VOTIVE TABLET AT VIENNA.

atmosphere that he and his colleagues created for themselves was a congenial one, and the many guests, from royalty downwards, who visited Esterházy from all parts of Europe, kept him more or less in touch with the outer world, and helped considerably to spread the reputation he was gradually making for himself as a composer.

This was Haydn's life for nearly thirty years, unrelieved by any more exciting event than a couple of visits to Vienna

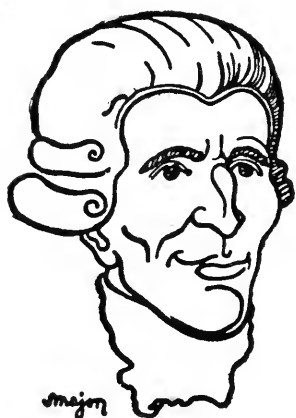
with the rest of the Prince's musical retinue, and an occasional stay in Pressburg with his patron. But these years were very fruitful in composition, the number of works that issued from his pen during this period being almost too numerous to mention. They included the operas *La Speziale*, *L'Infedeltà delusa*, *La vera Costanza*, *L'Isola disabitata*, *La Fedeltà premiata*, and several others ; the oratorios the 'Return of Tobias' and the 'Seven Words of our Saviour' (the latter written for the cathedral at Cadiz) ; a Stabat Mater ; several Masses ; about eighty symphonies ; a great many quartets, trios, sonatas, vocal pieces, and numberless other works of every description. The operas never obtained more than an ephemeral success, and many of the other compositions are forgotten, or only known to the musical antiquarian. Indeed, although this long period of Haydn's life was responsible for the bulk of his music,

so much of it was written to order, or to please the taste of his patron, and the resources at his disposal were comparatively so small, that a large proportion of it does not possess the lasting value that attaches to his later compositions. Still, there are not a few of the works of this period which have the true Haydn freshness, charm, and musicianship, and which are fine examples of his genius—notably the ‘Seven Words,’ some of the symphonies, and of course the string quartets, which latter continue to hold their high place in the world of chamber music, and are still played and listened to with the same delight that accompanied their performance over a century ago.

But it was not until his later years, when most men’s powers are beginning to fail, that his gifts fully developed themselves, and he gave to the world his finest and most matured compositions.

In 1790 Prince Nicolaus died, leaving the musician, who from a mere musical servant in his household had risen to a position of true friendship, a pension of one thousand florins. This was added to by his successor, Prince Anton; but at the same time the orchestra was disbanded, and though Haydn retained the title of Kapellmeister, and indeed still considered himself in the service of his new patron (which he proved by returning to him after a few years), his occupation was for the time being at an end, and the connection which had existed between him and the Esterhazy family for the greater part of his life was suspended, never to be again renewed in quite the same way. All this while Haydn’s fame had been growing all over Europe, and had already reached England, and it was at this juncture that Salomon, the violinist, came forward with an invitation to him to visit London, and compose and conduct some new symphonies at a series of concerts the former intended giving in that city. He had received previous similar offers, and Salomon had even gone so far on one occasion as to despatch a friend, Bland the music publisher, to see the composer and try to induce him to come over; but Haydn’s duties did not then permit of his accepting the engagement, and all that came of the interview was the present of two or three compositions, amongst which was a string quartet, nicknamed the ‘Razor’ quartet from the fact that Bland, surprising the composer in the act of shaving, heard him exclaim, ‘I would give my

best quartet for a decent razor,' and rushing off for his own, gave it to Haydn, who was as good as his word, and the amusing transaction was then and there completed. This time, however, the disbandment of the Esterhazy orchestra rendered Haydn free to do as he liked, so he gladly accepted Salomon's invitation, and set off for London at the end of the year 1790. Here he spent three years; eighteen months on his first visit, and about the same length of time on a subsequent one; and these years were perhaps the most eventful, or at all events the most interesting, of his whole life. The change from the monotonous existence he had led for more than a quarter of a century to the gaiety and excitement of London was a great one for him.



A CARICATURE.

The patience, industry, and sense of obedience to those in a higher station than himself, which he inherited from his peasant ancestry, had kept him uncomplainingly at his work; but now that he was free and still possessed of wonderful vitality for his years, he entered fully into everything, and had what one generally calls a really 'good time.' He was the recipient of every honour and attention that could possibly be bestowed on him; invitations poured in upon him from all quarters, and his circle of friends included nearly all the notabilities of rank, fashion, and art of the

time. He enjoyed the personal friendship of the Prince of Wales, and was a constant visitor at Carlton House, where he used often to accompany the Prince in his violoncello solos; he was also invited to stay with the Duke of York at Oatlands, and was received on more than one occasion at Buckingham Palace by George III. and Queen Charlotte, who, though still greatly under the influence of Handel's music, were, all the same, most appreciative of his genius.

Among the many tributes of esteem paid to him was the conferring of the degree of Doctor of Music by Oxford University. As an example of his erudition and his fondness for little jokes, even in his music, it may be mentioned that instead of sending in the 'exercise' usual on these academic occasions, he contented himself with a little three-part com-

position consisting of only six bars. The university professors at first could not understand its purport, but on examining it more closely, they discovered that it was a cleverly constructed little canon, so written that whichever way it was read, backwards, forwards, or upside down, there was always a melody with a correct contrapuntal accompaniment. The following is a copy of this unique little curiosity—



Besides all this personal fêting and lionising, Haydn's artistic success in England was very great. His compositions were performed not only at the Salomon concerts, but on every other available opportunity; and the enthusiasm they created and the tidy little fortune he made by their sale and performance, and by the concerts he himself gave, induced him to say afterwards that 'it was only in England that such sums could be earned by artists, and that it was not until his gifts had been so widely recognised in that country that he became really famous in Germany.'

Many are the anecdotes related of Haydn during his stay in London, and though perhaps their veracity cannot always be vouched for, one or two of them are amusing enough to be quoted. One day he was walking along the streets, indulging in his favourite amusement of looking in the shop windows, when he happened to come across a music-shop. He entered and asked to see the latest musical novelties. The shopman handed him some, with the remark: 'Here are some of Haydn's sublime compositions.' 'Oh, I don't want any of that,' said the *incognito* composer. 'Why not?' replied the other, rather angrily, as he was a great admirer of Haydn's music, 'have you any fault to find with it?' 'Yes,' answered Haydn, 'and if you have nothing better to show me, I shall have to go without buying anything.' 'Then you had

better do so, for there is nothing in my shop suitable for such as you.' At this moment a friend of the composer entered, and greeting him by name, congratulated him upon the success of his latest symphony; whereupon the music-seller, having caught the name 'Haydn,' said, 'Ah! here is a musician who does not like that composer's music.' The friend at once saw what had occurred, explained the joke, and all three laughed heartily over the incident.

The Prince of Wales commissioned Hoppner to paint Haydn's portrait while both were staying at Oatlands; but the great musician was a bad sitter, and from very weariness could not prevent his features assuming a grave and thoughtful expression—the very reverse of what the artist wanted. After two or three attempts Hoppner was almost in despair, until at last the Prince and he hit upon an innocent way of obtaining the required result. His Royal Highness had among his domestics a pretty German girl, and it was arranged that at the next sitting she should also be present. Accordingly, when Haydn again came to the studio, the servant-girl, elegantly attired, made her appearance, and going up to him, exclaimed in German, 'Oh! great man of my fatherland, how happy I am to see thee and to stand in thy presence!' This burst of enthusiasm so delighted the composer that he embraced the girl, his face beaming with smiles, and entered into a lively conversation with her. It need hardly be said that the artist (unknown to the others) took every advantage of the precious moments, was successful in obtaining the desired animated expression, and the portrait was finished to his own and every one's satisfaction.

For a really pretty compliment the following would be difficult to beat. One day Sir Joshua Reynolds showed Haydn a portrait of the celebrated singer, Mrs. Billington, which he had just completed, and in which he had painted her as St. Cecilia listening to celestial music. Haydn, being asked what he thought of it, said: 'It is indeed a beautiful picture, and very like her; but there is one great mistake in it.' 'What is that?' inquired Reynolds. 'Why, you have painted her listening to the angels, when you ought to have represented the angels

listening to her.' It is a pity the lady was not present to hear the charming compliment, but it is not likely that she was kept long in ignorance of it.

Haydn's first visit to London came to an end in June 1792. He then returned to Vienna, where he was received with great enthusiasm, and where the symphonies he had written for Salomon were performed with the utmost success. But he did not remain very long in the Austrian capital. Having entered into a new engagement with Salomon to compose another set of six symphonies, he once more took his departure for London in January 1794. His second stay there was but a repetition of the former one: artistic success, constant fêting, visits to the country homes of his friends, and honour and recognition; on all sides, in short, a succession of musical and social triumphs of every description. It

was difficult for him to tear himself away from such a pleasant life, but another Esterhazy had arisen (Prince Anton had died a short while before) and desired to reconstitute the orchestra with Haydn again as conductor, and the latter, feeling himself still bound to the family, reluctantly bade farewell to the country that had done him so much honour, and left London for the last time in August 1795. His fame was now firmly established all over the world, and he had earned enough money during the last few years to keep him, if not in luxury, at least free from all pecuniary anxiety for the rest of his life. His position with Prince Esterhazy no longer tied him down as it formerly did, for he was only required at Eisenstadt during the summer and autumn months, the rest of the time being spent in Vienna. His powers as a composer



HAYDN'S MUSICAL VISITING-CARD.

were by no means impaired, but on the contrary, three years after his return to Vienna, at the age of sixty-six, he composed his greatest work, the 'Creation,' the libretto of which had been given him by Salomon in London shortly before he left. This oratorio was produced in 1798, and with such success that it soon found its way everywhere, and became, and remained for a great many years, the most popular oratorio, save the 'Messiah,' in the repertoire of all choral societies; even to-day, after the lapse of more than a century, it has not yet quite lost its place in the esteem and affection of the public. The 'Creation' was followed a year or two afterwards by the 'Seasons,' the success of which at the time of its production was nearly as great as the first-named work. This was Haydn's last important composition: he wrote a few vocal quartets and other trifles afterwards, but the zenith of his powers had been reached; the fruit of his genius had ripened to its fullest extent and the period of decay set in. The sustained effort, at his age, of two such big works as the 'Creation' and the 'Seasons' was too much even for his wonderful vitality, and he paid the penalty. The remaining seven years of his life were passed almost in seclusion—save for the visits of his intimate friends—and he gradually grew more and more infirm as the end approached. His last appearance in public was at a performance of the 'Creation' at the Vienna University in 1808. The occasion must have been very touching and pathetic. The composer was so old and feeble that he had to be wheeled in a chair to the place allotted him among the most select and aristocratic of the audience. When the well-known passage came, 'And there was light,' Haydn raised himself from his seat and, amid the enthusiasm which the music, together with the presence of its aged author, had aroused, he pointed to heaven, and exclaimed, 'Not from me, but from thence it came!' after which he sank back in his chair and became so agitated and exhausted that he had to be carried out of the concert-room, the people thronging round to take what they felt was their last leave of him. He lingered on for another year, and breathed his last on May 31, 1809, at the good old age of seventy-seven. He was buried first in Hundsthurm cemetery, but his remains (all except the skull, which had been stolen) were taken away eleven years later and reinterred by desire of Prince Esterhazy in

the church at Eisenstadt, in the midst of the surroundings he had known so well, and near to the home of the noble family in whose service he had worked so long and zealously, and whose name is so closely associated with his own in the history of music.

His was a life of extraordinary activity. The number of his works alone is prodigious, without taking into account the time he was obliged to devote for so many years to his duties in connection with the daily rehearsals and performances of the Esterhazy orchestra. He wrote 125 symphonies, 77 quartets, 31 concertos, 176 pieces for the baryton

Beste Dienstag den 2ten März 1790.
 Auf dem 2. Hoftheater nächst der Burg
 aufgeführt

Die Schöpfung.

Ein Oratorium
 in Musik gesetzt
 von Joseph Haydn, Director der Musik, und Hofkapellmeister, kaiserlichen Kammermusikanten

Nicht selten für Herden schmeichelt das Ohr, als der Besatz des Publikum. Den ja verdienen hat er sich nicht leicht
 bekehrt, und ihn bereit ist, und mehr, als es sich versprochen durfte, zu erwerben das Glück gehabt. Von jetzt er
 zwar für das hier angetragene Werk die größte Achtung, die er in seinem künftigen Leben und Danke bis jetzt erfahren
 hat, ebenfalls zu haben, doch wünscht er noch, daß auf den Fall, wo zur Ausführung des Besatz sich ermann die Ge-
 legenheit erhalte, ihm gelassen sein möge, denselben wohl als ein höchstschätzbares Merkmal der Zufriedenheit, nicht
 aber als einen Beweis zur Wiederbestätigung irgend eines Stückes anzusehen, wenn auch die gesamte Vertreibung der ein-
 zelnen Theile, und deren ununterbrochene Folge die Wirkung des Ganzen empfangen soll, nachher nicht verfehlt, und
 dadurch das Vergnügen, dessen Erwartung ein nicht leicht zu glücklicher Ausbruch des Publikums erreicht hat, mehr noch
 mindert werden möchte

Der Anfang ist um 7 Uhr.
 Die Eintrittspreise sind wie gewöhnlich.
 Die Worte werden bey der Fülle ganz ausgesprochen.

BILL OF THE FIRST PERFORMANCE OF THE 'CREATION.'

(a now obsolete instrument of the viola family, which his patron was very fond of playing), 14 Masses, several operas, the oratorios 'Tobias,' the 'Seven Words,' the 'Creation,' and the 'Seasons'; and a great many other smaller works such as songs, piano pieces, etc. Surely a remarkable record of prolificness, even taking the length of his life into consideration.

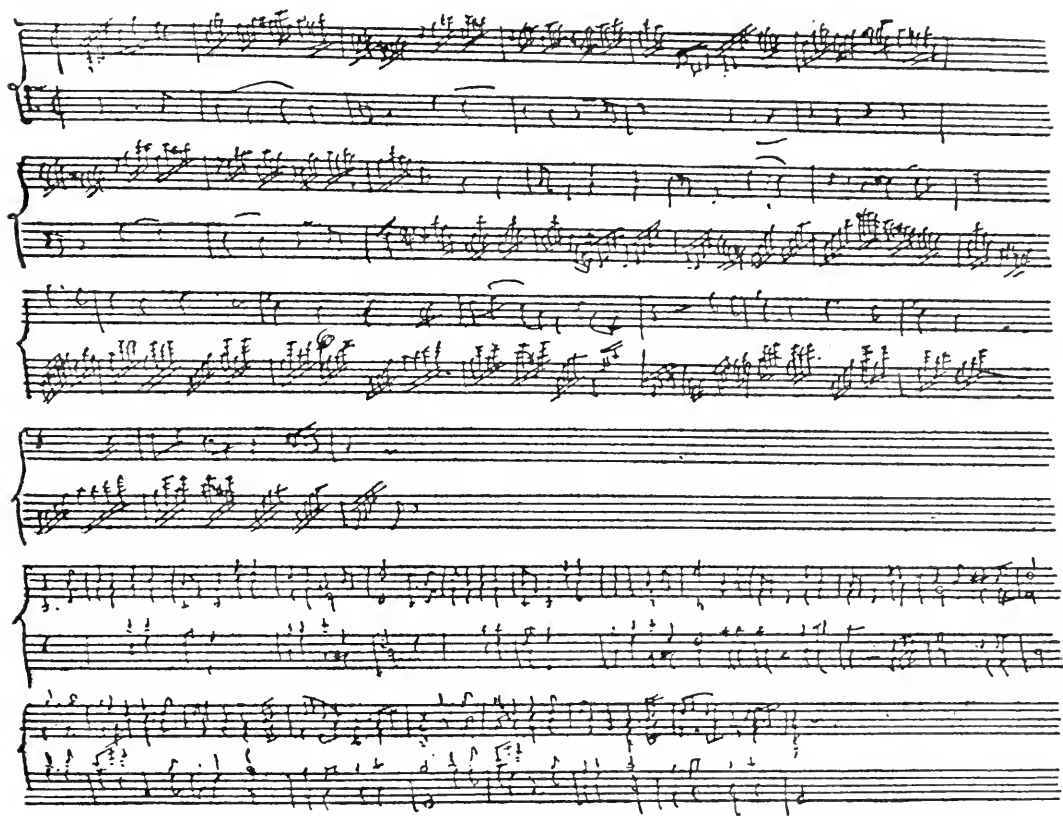
The chief characteristics of Haydn's music are its spontaneous freshness and tunefulness, its clearness of form, its spirit of innocent mirth and gaiety, and the solid workmanship which almost invariably forms its basis. Although his style was in the beginning modelled on

that of his predecessors, yet his intuitive genius soon found a wider opening; and by discarding the mere scholastic and contrapuntal methods of the time, and adopting continuous melodic themes as the foundation for the structure and working out of his movements, he imparted a new character to the art, and created for himself an originality of style which is impressed on all he wrote, and which even Beethoven (who was his pupil for a time) could not avoid imitating in his earlier compositions. The 'Creation,' as has already been stated, is without doubt Haydn's finest achievement. Much of it may seem old-fashioned to present-day tastes, but in its own simple way it portrays in happy, if not very vivid colours, those scenes of Nature's beginning and developments which are suggested by the mythical story; and the representation of Chaos, and the Breaking of Light into the world that follows, if not depicted with the resources that the modern composer would be tempted to use, is none the less very impressive. The 'Creation' was Haydn's favourite work: he said of it, 'That will live. In it angels sing, but in the "Seasons" only peasants.' In this he was not far wrong, and the latter work, though containing many charming numbers, is chiefly remarkable for the youthful freshness and melodiousness which its composer, at seventy years of age, was still able to infuse into its pages.

Haydn has been called the Father of the Symphony and Quartet; and with every reason; for if he did not actually invent these forms, he at least so developed them, enlarged their scope, and perfected their shape, that they became the pattern on which all composers have modelled their works of this character. Beethoven, it is true, further increased their significance and proportions, and others have gone on doing so ever since; to such an extent, indeed, that (to speak more especially of the Symphony) the form has assumed a size, and in many cases an unwieldiness, which Haydn himself little dreamt of, and which he certainly would not recognise: but nevertheless the original mould is still there, and is likely to remain unaltered in its main aspects for a long time yet to come.

The finest of Haydn's symphonies are the set of twelve he composed for Salomon, and these too are the oftenest played. But some of the earlier ones deserve to be heard more frequently than they are, for if

not perhaps on the same high level as the others, they nearly all abound in that charm and, one may almost say, *naïveté* which are to be found in all he wrote. A number of these symphonies have titles—some rather curious—which, as far as we know, were not affixed to them by their author, but were given them later in reference to some peculiar characteristic, or to some incident or occasion in connection with their composition.



HAYDN'S FIRST SKETCH FOR THE AUSTRIAN NATIONAL ANTHEM.

Thus we have the 'Military,' so called on account of the bass drum, cymbals and triangle used in the Allegretto and Finale: 'La Poule,' on account of the oboe phrases in the first movement resembling the cackling of poultry: the 'Clock,' because of the regular monotonous movement of the strings in the Andante: 'L'Ours' (The Bear), in which the clumsy dancing of that animal is amusingly represented: 'Le Matin' and 'Le Midi,' whose titles are due, it is said, to the desire of Prince Esterhazy to have symphonies composed fitting each part of the

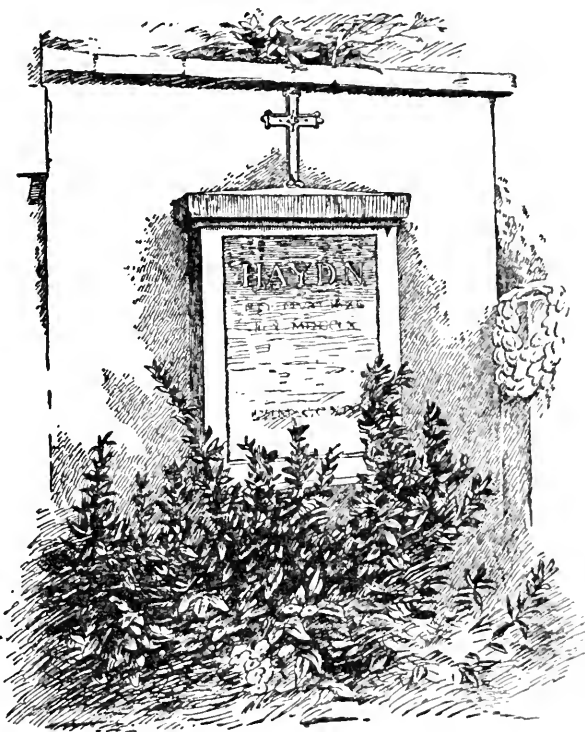
day : 'Maria Theresa,' so named to commemorate its first performance in the presence of that Empress : 'La Reine de France,' for a similar reason in connection with Queen Marie Antoinette : the 'Oxford,' because of its association with Haydn's visit to that city.

The reason for the title given to the 'Farewell' symphony is well known. The life that the musicians led at Esterházy was somewhat dull and monotonous, separated as they were from their wives and families ; and it was only natural that after a time they should weary of it, and desire a little change. They therefore asked Haydn to intercede for them with the Prince, so that they might obtain a holiday and visit their homes. This Haydn did, but in a very cunning and subtle way. He composed a symphony which began merrily enough, but towards the end grew gradually sadder and sadder, and he had written it in such a manner that each instrument left off a few bars before the other. So, as the players successively finished their parts, they blew out their candles (according to a previous arrangement between them), packed up their instruments, and went out of the room, leaving at last only two violins and the conductor to bring the piece to a conclusion. The Prince, after his first astonishment, soon saw what was implied by this unmistakable hint, and laughingly remarked : 'If all go, we might as well go too.' He thereupon gave orders for a general move to Vienna : the musicians got their holiday, and no doubt returned refreshed and ready to resume their labours with renewed vigour and enthusiasm.

Another instance of the composer's fondness for musical jokes is the so-called 'Surprise' symphony. Haydn was supposed to have noticed (with how much truth we cannot say) that the English audiences cared only for his *allegros* and *minuets*, and that during the slow movements they began to get bored, and ended by sleeping peacefully. He therefore in this symphony prepared a 'surprise' for them, and wrote an Andante of a most soothing character, but which, just as it was dying away in the softest way imaginable, was interrupted by a sudden big *fortissimo* from the entire orchestra—a reminder to the delinquents that they were in a concert-room and not in their beds. Whether this device would have the same effect nowadays on audiences accustomed to ear-splitting noises is a matter open to considerable doubt.

Other symphonies with names are 'La Chasse,' the 'Schoolmaster,' the 'Philosopher,' the 'Echo,' and the 'Toy' symphony, in which, as every one knows, children's musical playthings, such as the cuckoo, nightingale, toy trumpet and drum, etc., take the place of the usual orchestral instruments.

These titles are not entirely confined to Haydn's symphonies, but are to be found occasionally in his other works. One of these, a little minuet he wrote, supplies us with yet another anecdote. A butcher in Vienna called one day upon the composer, and informed him that his daughter was about to be married, and being very fond of Haydn's music, was anxious to have a piece written by the celebrated musician specially for the happy event. Haydn, so the story goes, good-naturedly complied with the request, and sent the bride a minuet as a wedding present. A few days afterwards he was surprised to hear the music of this little piece being played outside his house, and, going to the window, he saw



HAYDN'S GRAVE IN HUNDSTHURM CHURCHYARD.

his friend the butcher holding a huge, highly decorated ox, and surrounded by a band of street musicians. Gaining admission to Haydn's room, the butcher bowed, and said: 'Dear sir, I thought I could not express my gratitude for your kindness to my daughter in a more becoming manner than by offering you the finest ox in my possession.' After several refusals Haydn was finally obliged to accept the unusual gift, and the animal was left with him. The story does not tell us whether he kept it in his drawing-room among his many trophies (which is unlikely) or realised a good price by its sale; but in any case

the amusing incident—probably just a *little* exaggerated—furnished the piece with the nickname of the ‘Ox’ minuet.

Space does not permit of more than a passing allusion to Haydn’s other important works—his beautiful Masses, string quartets, etc.; but his songs, including the charming and popular ‘My Mother bids me bind my hair,’ and the ‘Spirit Song,’ deserve special mention; as also does another small but fine composition, viz. the hymn ‘God preserve the Emperor,’ which he composed in honour of his native land. The idea of writing this was suggested to him by hearing ‘God save the King.’ It is the only instance on record of a country’s National Anthem being composed by one of her greatest musicians, and its simple but stirring strains are to this day invariably used as the expression of Austrian loyalty and patriotism. Haydn had a great partiality for this melody, and used it as the theme for some variations in one of his quartets; it was also the last thing he ever played, only a few days before his death.

In person Haydn was short, with strong and thickset limbs; his features were regular, and his eyes had a kindly and benevolent expression; but his complexion was very swarthy, and was further spoilt by being deeply pitted with smallpox. Altogether he could hardly be called good-looking, and indeed he considered himself an ugly man, and could never understand how it was that so many handsome women were attracted by him. He was very neat both in his appearance, his music, and his domestic arrangements. From early morning he always wore full costume, with shoes and buckles, and the wig with side-curls and pigtail, which never altered to the end of his life. This habit of dispensing altogether with dressing-gown and slippers arose from the fact that his patron would often send for him at the most unexpected hours, and he soon realised that the best and safest method was to be ready from the time he rose for any emergency of the sort. He was faddy, and not a little superstitious; for example, he professed not to be able to get a single idea if the music-paper on which he had to compose was not of the whitest and finest quality, or if by any chance he had forgotten to put on the diamond ring which had been given him by

Frederick II. of Prussia, and which, by the bye, was the only piece of jewellery he ever cared to wear.

He was a very religious man, both in his inward convictions and his outward strict observance of the duties of his faith. In his Masses (some of which rank among his masterpieces) there is a note of cheerfulness, sometimes almost of jollity, which is not perhaps always in keeping with the solemnity of the words. This, however, did not arise from lack of devoutness, but from a feeling of joy and thankfulness to the Giver of all good which was always uppermost in his heart. This pious sense of gratitude also found expression in the mottoes with which he so often began and ended his scores: 'In nomine Domini,' 'Laus Deo,' and other religious inscriptions of the same sort. While he was composing the 'Creation' he himself said, in further proof of this almost childlike faith, 'I knelt down every day and prayed God to strengthen me for my work.'

Haydn was a great admirer of Handel and Mozart; the latter especially he always spoke of in terms of the highest possible appreciation, often saying that he (Mozart) was the greatest composer he had ever heard. The friendship between the two illustrious men, notwithstanding the great disparity in their ages, was a very sincere one, and Mozart reciprocated to the full the admiration his elder colleague had for him: in proof of which he dedicated a set of six string quartets to him, accompanying the dedication with a charming letter in Italian, of which the following is a translation:—

'A father having resolved to send forth his children into the wide world, is anxious to confide them to the protection and guidance of a man who enjoys much celebrity there, and who fortunately, moreover, is his best friend. Here, then, are the children I entrust to a man so



MONUMENT TO HAYDN IN VIENNA.

renowned, and so dear to me as a friend. . . . During your last stay in this capital, you yourself, my dearest friend, expressed your satisfaction with regard to them. This suffrage from you above all inspires me with the wish to offer them to you, and leads me to hope that they will not seem to you wholly unworthy of your favour. Be pleased, then, to receive them kindly, and be to them a father, a guide, and a friend. From this moment I transfer to you all my rights over them; but I entreat you to look with indulgence on those defects which may have escaped the too partial eye of a father, and, in spite of these, to continue your generous friendship towards one who so highly appreciates it; and in the meantime I am from my heart your sincere friend,

‘MOZART.’

Reference has already been made to Haydn’s marriage, but a few more words on the subject may here be added.

It was the one really foolish thing he did in his life, and he had not even the excuse of genuine love for the action; in fact, his affections were placed on his wife’s younger sister (they were daughters of a certain Keller, a wig-maker in Vienna), but she took the veil, and the father persuaded him to marry the other. The union—if such it can be called—was a most unhappy one. His wife had not the least appreciation of his genius, and, moreover, she possessed all those unfortunate qualities of heartlessness, unsociability, extravagance, and bigotry which could not fail to be a constant source of annoyance and irritation to a man of Haydn’s disposition. Luckily his duties did not admit of their being much together, and in the end, growing tired of her continual squabbling when he was at home, he separated from her. There were no children of the marriage, and under the circumstances it may be forgiven him if, as time went on, he sought consolation and sympathy elsewhere, and took pleasure in the society of other women who admired his genius and his many good personal qualities. It is to be presumed that he did not neglect to contribute towards his wife’s support while she lived (she died nine years before him). Once she wrote to ask him to buy a house for her, saying it would be just the place for her when she became a widow, but it is scarcely to be wondered at that he did not comply

with a request couched in such pleasant (?) terms. However, on his return to Vienna, liking the house, he bought it for himself, and lived there for the last twelve years of his life.

And now, no more fitting conclusion could be made to this little biography than to relate a pretty incident that took place after Haydn's return from his second visit to London, an incident which showed the admiration and esteem in which he was held by his countrymen, and, for that reason, one that must have given him greater pleasure and gratification than anything else in his long and honoured career.

Some noblemen and gentlemen made up a party and took the composer to his native village, Rohrau, where, to his surprise and delight, they showed him a monument and bust of himself which had been erected on the banks of the river Leitha. They then visited the humble cottage where he was born, and which he had not seen for nearly fifty years. So moved was he by the memories of his early childhood, that he knelt down and kissed the threshold; then pointing to the stone where he had been accustomed to sit, he said, 'There is where my musical career began!' And this indeed was so. From the little peasant boy who, on that very spot, had so often imitated the violin-playing of his school-master, he rose, almost self-taught, and by his never-ceasing industry and earnestness of purpose, to a position of eminence, honoured by all, and leaving behind him the record of a long life well spent in the accomplishment of the task he had set himself. His name will always be held in affection, and if his music is perhaps not all of equal value, the number of beautiful works he bequeathed to posterity, and the great debt which the progress and development of the art owes to his genius, entitle him without any doubt to a high and secure place among the 'immortals.'



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That Haydn was not ignorant of the benefits he had conferred on the world of music his own words prove—words, however, that did not spring from conceit, but were the simple utterance of a glad and grateful heart. ‘I know,’ he says, ‘that God has bestowed a talent upon me, and I thank Him for it ; I think I have done my duty, and been of use in my generation by my works ; let others do the same.’

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